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SONGS AND LYRICS

BY

CHARLES WHITWORTH WYNNE
Author of "Ad Astra"



NEW YORK
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY
1900

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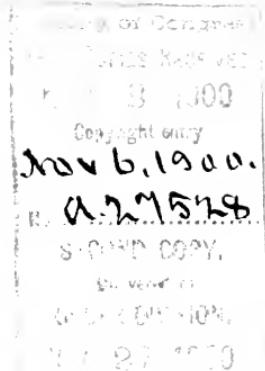
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ROBERT DRUMMOND, PRINTER, NEW YORK

TO

GLADYS

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SONGS AND LYRICS

DAWN FIRES

I HAVE ask'd you the simplest question
That my soul in its want could conceive,
And you treat the question lightly
In a world of make-believe.

You would have me say that I love you
Ten thousand, thousand times,
But, when I ask for an answer,
'Tis ever the same old chimes—

The chimes of my spirit's fancy,
Ringing my heart's desire,

But never a word that would set me free
From the doubts that burn like fire!

For seven long years have I waited,
Trusting the clouds would break,
And your spirit dawn upon me
The brighter for Love's sake.

But now I am none the wiser
Than when Love first began,
And still the old fire goes smouldering on
With a hope I cannot span.

Perchance, when this voice is silent,
The answer will come too late,
And only the wild winds echo
The sadness of our Fate!

For, if in my life I loved you,
My death shall more than prove
That never for us shall open
The pearly gates of Love.

THE COTTAR'S SONG

HERE the birds still chirp and twitter
In November days,
Meting out the sweet and bitter
In the life they praise.

London streets may brim with morsels,
Dainty bits and fine,
But for them the cottage door-sills,
Ruddy light and shine!

Better half a crumb with gladness
In the light of day,

THE COTTAR'S SONG

5

Than a feast with pale-faced sadness
Brooding o'er the way.

Let me feel the warmth of Heaven
As it purely flows—
Feel that it is freely given,
Straight from God's own brows!

Not for me the City's glamour,
Its adulterate wine—
Hectic flush and noisy clamour
Of a World supine.

IANTHE

IANTHE! could thy name express
 But half the love I feel for thee,
Why, from my voice, thou then mightst guess
 How very dear thou art to me!

No other homage would I pay,
 But simply breathe again thy name—
A thousand things it seems to say
 That thee, and thee alone, proclaim.

For in thy presence there doth flow
 A music that is passing sweet—
 6

All other notes are lost below
Until within thy name they meet.

And, whether by the brooklet's side,
Or by the shallow, murmuring weir,
In the soft hush of eventide
Thy name alone floats on my ear.

Or, in the silence of the night,
If thy dear name my sleep invade,
I wake to clasp a brief delight—
I wake to find the vision fade.

TWILIGHT

O MYSTIC Hour! when day and night
Seem spell-bound with the fading light,
When hill and valley, dale and grove,
Bespeak none other voice but Love.

Recumbent on her couch of pine,
With languorous grace and dewy eyne,
The Queen of Heaven¹ doth now unfold
Her fatal beauty limn'd in gold.

Whilst on the air the bat's bent wings
Add witchery to earthly things,

¹ The Planet Venus.

As, sailing with uneven flight,
He mocks the shadows of the night.

Now doth my spirit feel a part
Of ONE, Great, Universal Heart—
The bond of fellowship at least
'Twixt Man and Nature, bird and beast.

FLAVIA'S FAREWELL

Suggested by the 'Prisoner of Zenda'

If Love were all, then might not thou and I
Seek out some plot of Earth before we die,
And live and breathe into each other's being
The happiness which seems beyond our seeing?

If Love were all, then might I take thy hand,
And wander with thee into Fairyland—
How poor soe'er thy lot, no cloud could be
Too great that did encompass thee and me.

If Love were all, then on that all I'd cast
My life, my honour, all that Fame holds fast;

For but to be enfolden in thine arms
Were rich reward for all a maiden's charms.

But Love is only Love when it doth bind
Hearts to themselves, with Godhead inter-
twined—

If I should yield, my love, and fly with thee,
Could I believe that God had smiled on me?

THE STAR OF HOPE

LOVE is not Love that can admit despair,
For Love was born of Hope, and Hope is fair—
With that bright Star to guide him on his way,
No life were loveless, tho' Love say him 'nay.'

What tho' the Worl'd may pass him by with
scorn,
Life without Love were surely more forlorn—
He, who has look'd upon Love's guiding Star,
Knows that it never sets—but burns afar!

Tho' Love shall never here his guerdon find,
Love leaves his own sweet recompense behind,
For but to love—is to forget the while
Earth and its sordid cares in Heaven's blue
smile.

ESTELLE

LIKE a diamond on a roseleaf when the rain
has gemm'd the flower,
Like the first faint flush of sunrise stealing over
stream and tower,
Like the palest light of evening, darkly deep-
ening every hour,
So are thine eyes, true love, to me.

Like the soft and fleecy treasure of a child's
bright golden hair,
Like the whiteness of the hawthorn when the
summer months are near,

Like the warmth of tender nestlings zoned
within a mossy sphere,

So are thine hands, true love, to me.

Like a brook that purls and ripples ever with
a silvery sound,

Like the chime of distant sleigh-bells tinkling
over frosty ground,

Like a soft-string'd Stradivarius, breathing on
a spirit wound,

So is thy voice, true love, to me.

Like the tints that fall at sunset on a cloud-
let's drifting snow,

Like the flash of crimson streamers when the
Alpine ridges glow,

Like the blossoms of the almond, like the petals
of the sloe,

So are thy cheeks, true love, to me.

Far beyond all Poet's dreaming—far beyond
his Heaven, his Hell,
Far beyond all depths of feeling—far beyond
what lovers tell,
Far beyond the voice of Conscience, whisper-
ing *that* thou didst was well,
 Such is thy smile, dear love, to me.

IS LOVE TENDER?

SHE

Is Love tender? Is Love kind?
Leaves he not his sting behind?

HE

True, he hates a timid holder,
Nettle-wise protects the bolder!

THE LITTLE ARCHER

DEFTLY the little Archer plies
His shafts of light—
Thou canst not hold him in disguise,
He lurks beneath those summer skies,
And revels in his victories
Till set of night.

And Love and Laughter hide and seek
Where lilies vie—
They chase the sunbeams o'er each cheek,
And ripple low, like waves that break
Upon the shingle of a lake
Until they die.

And Love hangs trembling on thy voice,
Entrancing soft—
The Love that crowns a maiden's choice,
The Love that makes a heart rejoice,
The Love that hears none other voice
Save that of Love.

LOVE-DOUBTS

ONLY as long, and so long as
No other heart seeks thine,
Wilt thou listen to the music
That's swelling at thy shrine!

Only as long, and so long as
No other eyes speak tears,
Wilt thou guard the sacred portals
That hide a vestal's fears!

Only as long, and so long as
No other voice pleads low,
Wilt thou seek to still the tumult
Beneath thy bosom's snow.

Only as long, and so long as
No other hand steals thine,
Wilt thou thrill beneath the pressure
Of this poor hand of mine!

Only as long, and so long as
No other his homage pays,
Wilt thou listen to my madness,
And tremble at its ways!

WITHERED HOPES

LAST night my heart was as a fading Rose,
Which in an Urn of Tears I did dispose—
When Dawn look'd down from out her pearly
throne,
The Rose was left, but ah! the Scent was flown.

THE WHITE POPPY

LIKE a shimmering poppy, robed in white,
With sashes and bows of golden green—
A very woman of soft delight,
Yet moulded as the flowers have been!

Within her eyes the palest blue
Bespoke a mind to calmness given,
A soul in which a man might view
The very sanctities of Heaven.

And when she smiled it seem'd as tho'
Pale shadowy moonbeams sought her lips,

And scatter'd there an argent glow
That never suffereth eclipse.

And those soft hands that lie superb
Upon the foldings of her gown,
O beating heart, how can I curb
The folly they would make you own?

For I would hold them in despite
Of any protest she might make,
Until I felt their warmth requite
The thing I ventured for her sake!

Till, warm'd with secret fires, I feel
Her reddening lips droop nearer mine,
And life upon its axis reel
With kisses that are more than wine!

.

ATTAR OF ROSES

LIKE the petals of the Rose,
When the dews their scent disclose,
Soft as velvet tho' they be,
Fragrant of the Dawn and thee,
Yet thy lips are sweeter far
Than all garden Roses are.

Once I thought my life supreme,
Bedded in a Rose's dream—
Scent of Attar on my lips,
Nectar that the brown bee sips,
Yet I never knew before
What sweet scents thy lips could store.

This, above that carmine wave,
Was the soft response they gave—
Fading fast before my touch,
Never yielding overmuch,
Now I have no peace of mind
Till thy lips again I find!

PHYLLIS

'Tis not that my Phyllis has sun-laden hair,
Those long, flowing tresses that lovers declare
Are the first of Love's charms, and the breath
of its air,
 I love her.

'Tis not that my Phyllis has wonderful eyes,
Whose depth is the ocean, whose zenith the
skies,
Whose harmonies wake in the kingdom of
sighs,
 I love her.

'Tis not that my Phyllis is sweet as the Rose,
When the dews of the morning its freshness
disclose,
Or as it more fragrantly sinks to repose,
 I love her.

'Tis not that my Phyllis is tender and kind,
That self is abandon'd—and others may find
That the charm of all charms is the charm of
her mind,
 I love her.

Then why do I love her?—Can any one tell?
And why should this maiden all maidens ex-
cel—
With Her is my Heaven, and with Her is my
Hell!

NATURE AND ART

NATURE and Art in Her combined
To make a perfect shrine
Where one may bare the spirit's brow
To worship the divine.

SONG

ALL my longing, since first I beheld thee,
My lips in three words would convey,
But to speak them might breathe of dishonour
To one whom I would not betray.

Oh, what if I never may tell thee,
And die with the burden I bear!
Wilt thou value the friendship I gave thee,
The silence that cost me so dear?
30

And so in our hearts we must cherish
The knowledge that makes life divine,
And, when in the dawning we perish,
God mingle thine ashes with mine!

THRO' THE PASS OF LLANBERIS

You . . . at the end of the valley,
Storm-wrack and cloud before—
Thro' the wild pass of Llanberis
To the gleam of a southern shore.

So, thro' the gulfs of sorrow,
Thro' anguish of heart and mind,
One only hope to my journey,
One haven of peace I find.

Yet, if that hope should fail me,
That home in the valley fair,
Alone, 'mid the wastes of the mountains,
Must I wrestle with despair!

MY SILVER MOON

As the moon puts on new lustre
In the blackest of the night,
So thine eyes with deepening splendour
Flood my darken'd soul with light.

SAY YOU LOVE ME

SAY you love me!—speak it softly,
Breathe once more the whisper'd vow,
Look into mine eyes, and tell me
That you never loved till now.

Let me feel your arms around me,
Hold me ever closer prest,
Life has no diviner greeting,
Love no holier place of rest.

Raise once more the cup of passion
To my aching lips anew,
Let me dream that I am fading
Into Heaven's eternal blue.

THE RING-DOVE

'MID beechy umbrage, bosky dell,
'Tis there the Ring-dove loves to dwell,
And, when the fiery noon is high,
Croon softly to the sapphire sky.

Like plashing waters heard at even,
In which the sunset lights are riven,
His mellow voice is soft and cool
As moonbeams on a silent pool.

Not here the upward-soaring lark
With quivering throat can pierce the dark—
37

The Nightingale might sing in vain
Within the Ring-dove's hush'd domain.

Thy song is like a summer dream
Beside some gently-rilling stream—
A vale where quiet hearts may rest
And in Love's sanctity be blest.

Amid the lush and waving grass
I watch the shadows as they pass,
And in thy leafy covert find
A solace to my wounded mind—

That Life is short, and Art is vain—
All unpremeditate thy strain!
That Love is long, and Virtue sure,
And wedded bliss is more and more.

TO MAY

MAY, like a maiden soft and fair,
With pink-white blossoms in her hair,
Came tripping thro' the verdant mead,
With lightsome heart and frolic tread.

To her came lovers, old and young,
Whom wintry griefs had kept from song,
To pay once more their votive vows
For all the wealth her grace bestows.

The Cuckoo, too, his note doth raise
In one incessant song of praise,

And little birds from tree and bough
Her, Queen of all the months, allow.

The Chestnut and the Hawthorn vie
Whose blossoms shall outmatch the sky,
Where soft and fleecy clouds unveil
Their blueness to the Nightingale.

Now mounts the Lark on quivering wing
The treasures of his heart to sing,
And flood the hollow vault of Heaven
With music not to mortals given.

Dame Nature in her softest gown
Doth greet the darling as her own,
And with a mother's loving heart
Doth press those tender lips apart.

Maiden of Months! to thee I bring
This little tribute of the Spring—
Content, if in thy smiles I see
A glimpse of what thy love might be!

INVOCATION TO THE MUSES

AWAKE! ye tuneful Nine, and sing
The budding glories of the Spring,
Awake! and sweep each sounding lyre,
Breathe on the strings celestial fire!
Euterpè first, with her soft flute,
Shall bid the whistling winds be mute,
And after her let each in turn
Reveal the thoughts that inward burn!
And you, ye Nymphs, that haunt the
grove,
Whose only hardship is to love,
Who all night long in revel gay
Prolong the scenes ye shun by day,

And, circling round your Fairy Queen,
In sprightly dance rejoice unseen,
Awake! and let the Chorus bear
Your blended voices thro' the air!

* * * *

THE SPRING MINSTRELS

THRUSH

HARK! how the welkin rings,
Trembling with glee!
Hark! how the Mavis sings,
Changing his key!
Bird of the dapple-gray!
Thine is the sweetest lay,
Whistling from fragrant bay,
Happy and free.

BLACKBIRD

The Blackbird's piping call
Rings on my ear,
Its accents seem to fall
Both far and near—
Yet, with how true a note
The quavering stanzas float!
I would I had by rote
The half I hear!

LARK

Queen of the azure sky!
Whose dew-lapp'd home,
Green blades, or wheat, or rye
Serve for a dome—

Soaring, with spiral flight,
High o'er the realms of sight,
Wrapt in thy song's delight,
Where dost thou roam?

LINNET

List! how that gentle lay,
Sweetly refined,
Warbled from tender spray,
Floats on the wind—
Hopping from tree to tree,
Filling my soul with glee.
Linnet, thy melody
Is wondrous kind!

ROBIN

What ails thee, winter bard,
Melodious Robin?
Was that the voice I heard
When winds were sobbing?
Hast thou some vain regret
That holds thee in its net?
Surely the Spring can set
Thy heart a-throbbing!

THE ROOKS

Cradled in sunset glows,
Rock'd by the storm,
Far from their fellest foes,
Happy and warm—

Love in community,
Strong in Love's unity—
Dawn's importunity
Is Evening's calm.

ALL

Ye Poets of the air!
Ye that can fly,
Ye all have gifts most rare,
Ye all must die—
Then sing while sing ye may,
And sing while lasts the day,
Praising this Season gay
And God on High!

THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE

HE raised his harp, and flung aloft
 Its utmost power of song—
Tho' thousands jeer'd, and thousands scoff'd,
One little smile, as sweet as soft,
 Repaid him for his wrong!

STRAINED RELATIONS

THE guest of Sorrow and her sister Care,
I slept in their strange mansion yester-night,
Where foulest dreams disturb'd my restful
right,
And left me wide-awake with icy stare!

I breakfasted in those same Halls to-day—
The pictures frown'd upon me in their gloom,
And all was dark and deadly as the tomb:
I fled—tho' I was press'd upon to stay!

On, on, I flew towards the sunny South—
The fields and waters laughing at my haste

Sang merrily their songs from mouth to mouth,
And I felt bashful and the half-disgraced.

To-night I dine with other friends, but they
Are not relations, dare I so to say!

TO WINIFRED

(Aged Eighteen Months)

THE Syrens alone might tell you
The Land whence my Lady came,
Or the days she took to travel
Over a sea of flame.

She came with the early Dawn,
Before the stars were set,
The roseate streamers lighting
The gold on her coverlet.

But now . . . can I tell the wonder,
The Love that has come to me,
In the light of the bluest eyes
That ever smiled out of the sea?

Such treasure of golden floss,
In strands of drifting ore!
'Twas spun by a faëry hand,
By the light of faëry lore.

Her smile is a flash of the Dawn,
Before the morning breaks—
'Twould scatter the dullest clouds
That ever the East awakes!

Such tiny hands and feet,
Such mimicking words and ways!
And, oh, for that childish prattle,
When the heart, itself, betrays!

For to thee, thou little Innocent!
The world cannot help but be kind—
But, the larger the heart, the greater
The sorrow it needs must find.

LOVE'S GOLDEN PILGRIMAGE

To one who loves, all things are beautiful—
Love colours every thought, and on his wings
Doth bear those tender, sweet imaginings
That stir the soul to depths most dutiful.
The merry clamour of the bells at Yule,
The Cuckoo's trumpet-call, when first it rings
On unaccustom'd ears . . . and other Springs
Fade fast before the mind's bright vestibule! . . .

Are messengers of Love, but Love has more
Than all the wealth of Nature can bestow,

LOVE'S GOLDEN PILGRIMAGE 55

For he who loves, has of Love's boundless store
 A heart, a mind, whose riches overflow,
And, in the light and wisdom of Love's lore,
Perceives in Nature things unseen before.

LOVE'S WELCOME

HARK to the spirit voices from Love's sphere!
Sweet close to this melodious summer night—
Softly the song floats on from height to
height,
And every voice is eloquent of Her!
Can this be night, the brightness is so fair?
My Hall of Love is lit with crystal light,
If so my Lady shall my watch requite,
And earth and sky a richer radiance wear!

Shine on for ever o'er this heart of mine,
Ye night and stars, and Thou who lovelier art
56

Than what my wildest fancy might portray!
Entwine thy hallow'd glory round my heart,
And so encloud me, till I swoon away,
A victim to the Love that is divine.

LOVE'S ONENESS

(To a Lady who complained that others were neglected
for herself)

IF I had loved thee less, I had been free
 To smile when others smiled—to hope, or
 fear,
And lend to each such silent sympathy
 As well might prove a friend was listening
 near.

But, loving thee, I have no eyes to see
 What others see, or feel as others feel—
I have no thoughts that are not part of thee,
 And all my sweets from thoughts of thee I
 steal.

By day, by night, a presence everywhere,
Thy mirror'd loveliness in all I find—
In others' griefs I am not fit to share,
Who cannot turn from thee my steadfast
mind.

Thus loving thee far more than aught beside,
I've lost my friends, and thou dost merely chide!

LOVE'S SLEEPLESSNESS

I CAN no more mine eyes to sleep compose,
And thou alone sweet cause of my unrest!
Yet think not I would drive thee from my
breast,
Tho' ne'er again I might mine eyelids close.
Whilst thou hast closed thy petals like the rose,
And, safely shelter'd in thy little nest,
Art dreaming of a love thy tears caress'd,
Unconscious of thy lover and his woes!

Oh, would that I might tend thy lovely sleep,
And guard the passage of thine incensed
breath!—

To dwell upon thy breast's entrancing steep
Were all of Heaven, and too much of Death—
The heart that once had beat so near to thine
Would stop for aye, when sever'd from its
shrine!

LOVE'S BITTERNESS

WHY should I love, where others would despise?

Why idly hope thou still may'st love me
best?—

When every act doth wear a bold disguise,

And other friendships seem to stir thy breast!

And yet, to look but once upon those eyes,

So darkly beautiful, so purely true,

I, for my doubts, can but myself chastise,

Who could of thee such bitter thoughts re-
view!

Have I no cloak of hauteur, or of pride,

That I must fall to thinking foul of thee?

Shall jealous fears in my strong love abide?

Or is there estimate of love in me?

No, tho' mine eyes should tell me thou hadst
lied,

I'd tear them out to prove thy constancy!

LOVE'S RULE

How soon hath sped this golden summer day!

This day for ever sacred in our eyes,

That first reveal'd to us far dearer ties

Than any we have held 'neath Friendship's
sway.

Neither will lightly let it pass away,

And, as a thought long fondled never dies,

The memory of it shall renew our sighs

When other youthful joys have known decay.

So shall we blissfully from life decline,

Knowing that we have tasted to the full

The cup that other lips have deem'd divine—
The cup we drain'd in nectarous draughts
and cool!
And may Love's rosy garlands here enshrine
The Day we first submitted to Love's rule!

ESTRANGED

You spoke to me harshly, unkindly, last night,
When my heart was full of love,
You rain'd on me scorn from your realms above,
And left me passionless quite!

EVENING AT SEA

A **PERFECT** night!—a night of calm at sea,
In all its grace and all its purity,
And not a sound, save where the glittering spray
Falls off in emerald furrows round our way.
Myriads of little stars, divinely fair,
Come shimmering thro' the vestures of the
night,
And Venus in her loveliness is there,
Enthronèd Queen of all those realms of light!
Now, from the furthest disc, comes peeping forth
Diana, in her chaste robes of snow,
Pale as the daylight in the frozen North,
Yet full of sympathy, as lovers know,
For, as she mellows with each darkening hour,
Their linkèd hearts confess her gracious power.

TO A VICTORIAN KNIGHT

IT is not for the dints upon your shield
That tell of prowess in the ensanguined field,
For which our pure and princely Arthur gave
That badge of Honour—Knighthood to the
brave.

Nor yet like those great rovers of the main,
Who curb'd, and crush'd the mighty fleets of
Spain,
And, with the wisdom that her statesmen
drew,
Made good Queen Bess's Knights both brave
and true.
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TO A VICTORIAN KNIGHT

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No, greater than all these! Victoria's Knights
Their Sovereign's love in wider fields requites—
It is the power of brain, not of the sword,
On which they base their title to reward!

IMPROMPTU VERSES

(On leaving R.M.S. Norham Castle)

We quarrell'd over many things,
Agreed about few,
And yet, I am grieved
At parting from you.

Perhaps, ere we meet again,
You will discover
I was a truer friend
Than many a lover!

TO AN UNKNOWN GODDESS

LOVE?—I have sought it thro' the universe,

And found it never yet—

Oh, will some maid the glorious tale rehearse,

And let me pay Love's debt?

On lips and heart and eyebrows I would shower

The gifts that God hath given,

From Her receive a more than equal dower

Of all the gifts of Heaven.

TO A NONAGENARIAN FRIEND

(On his Ninetieth Birthday)

Lo, now you enter on your tenth decade,
In all your marvellous faculties array'd,
May you complete it with the other nine
Before you go to share the life divine!

MORNING HYMN

Now the golden morning shines,
Let us each be up and doing,
And, when daylight swift declines,
May it find us still pursuing!

Each hath his appointed sphere,
Hands and brain alike achieving,
Crowning all the fleeting year
With new beauties of his weaving.

Tho' the labour of his hands
Seems but to enrich another,

God, above him, understands
He is helping on some brother,

Who, of frailer mould and form,
Other purposes fulfilling,
Else had perish'd in the storm,
Laying by God's task, unwilling.

Tho' in mines he delve all day,
Gloom perennial surround him,
Every blow emits a ray
From the spot where Duty bound him.

Never let the heart repine,
Tho' thy toil seem unavailing—
Every labourer's work 's divine,
Never canst thou speak of failing!

Art, and Science, Medicine, Law,
Into unknown realms extending,
From thy steady purpose draw
Glorious triumphs, never-ending.

Every labourer's worth his hire—
Known to each his heart's devotion—
Every spark of burnish'd fire
Swell's the tribute of the ocean.

MAN'S TOIL

EACH man would wish to be his own good-
master—

Freedom the distant goal to which he strains.
'Tis strange such energy should court disaster,
Since he is happiest who last attains!

GUARD THY HEART!

GUARD thy heart! as tho' thy Lady
 Hung her costliest jewels there—
Tho' a thousand fiends persuade thee,
Yield not to the fleshly snare!

Let thy hand be firm and steady,
 Let thy heart be stout and true,
Let thy feet be ever ready,
Tho' the Master's calls be few.

Every thought of self abandon'd,
 Every passion lull'd to rest,

Every insult kindly pardon'd,
Every angry word repress'd,

Thou may'st rend the veil asunder,
See thy Master face to face!
In thy life reflect the wonder
Of so fair a dwelling-place.

And, when age to youth succeedeth,
Each fond memory shall appear
Like a voice that sweetly pleadeth,
Whispering words of love and cheer.

FORGIVENESS

‘MUST I forgive till seven times seven?’

A voice within me cried,

‘As thou wouldst hope to be forgiven,’

A Voice within replied,

And this my only hope of Heaven?—

O Lord, Thou know’st how hard I’ve striven

To conquer all my pride!

And must I turn each smarting cheek,

And kindly make reply?

My arm is strong—my faith is weak,

And storm-tears cloud mine eye.

'Beyond his strength is no man tried,'
That Voice within again replied,
'Tis Heaven—to pass it by!

And have I but the hour withstood?
Revenge, a welcome guest?
And shall this second, fiercer flood
O'erwhelm my battling breast?
O let me feel Thy Presence near,
Thy words of Love alone can cheer,
Alone can bring me rest!

THE SPIRIT OF POETRY

HOME-RETURNING in a shower,
 Found that I was smiling,
At the very time and hour
 Most men would be riling—
Thus, if Nature prove unkind,
 Only a poetic mind
 Can laugh without reviling!

SORROW'S THRONE

WHY are friends like summer showers,

As fresh as they are fleeting?

Why are friends like all sweet flowers

That die within the greeting?—

The sweetest sweets the soonest cloy,

Our dearest hopes deceive us,

And so with Friendship's fitful joy,

It only smiles to grieve us!

AN EQUATORIAL SUNSET

THE sun has set, and sea and sky are blending
In tints of purple, amaranth, and gold,
While fretted clouds, that stretch in line un-
ending,
New harmonies of light and shade unfold.
Like Sappho's cheek with love incarnadined,
The Western main is deepening every hour—
Till from the distance comes the soft night wind
Delicious numbness on the sense to pour,
Bringing forgetfulness of place and time—
When lo! from out the waves, apparell'd bright,
In all her witchery of golden light,
Fair Venus rises radiantly sublime,
And, 'mid the jewell'd splendour of the sky,
Calls forth a tear from many a lover's eye!

DEATH OF TENNYSON

(October 6, 1892)

MOURN, all ye Nations, mourn! for he is dead—
 The sweetest singer of our later choir,
Whose thoughts were borne aloft on wings
 of fire,
And Truth and Beauty left us in their stead.
The last of all our prophets now is fled—
 Fled is the music of his magic lyre,
The melody of half a world's desire,
 The yew and cypress wound about his head.

Sunrise and sunset shall go fleeting by,
 And all the voice of Nature now be mute,

Since he, who loved them, leaves us but his
lute,

With none the master of its minstrelsy—
Yet, in his life and death, what joy have we
Who knew the tree, and tasted of its fruit!

PEACE

THOU gentle Dove! sent out to warn mankind
 Of such a time when war shall cease to be,
 Yet ever to thy sheltering Ark dost flee,
For nowhere can thy feet a foothold find.
The air thou cleavest is with sulphur blind,
 While horrent shapes scud o'er the foamy sea,
 That bristles with a monster progeny—
The clash of arms is borne upon the wind.

○ when wilt thou return to tell of fields
 Ripening with plenty, whilst the smiling
 lands
Are bound by fellowship of hearts and
 hands?

No more the sword its bloody sceptre wields!

Come to us from the realms where Heaven
expands,

And bring the leaf the tender olive yields!

ON DEATH

WHY shouldst thou fear, since Death must
come?

Why, Mortal, shouldst thou fear the tomb?
Thou canst not one sweet minute gain,
Nor stay the Hand that stilleth pain,
Then bravely meet the silent Foe,
If Foe He be, Who ends thy woe!
For at the worst Forgetfulness—
And at the best great Happiness—
Will minister to thy distress,
And make the parting less and less!

TRUTH

A WILL-O'-THE-WISP that ever evades the sight,
The nearer we get, the blacker grows the night,
And he, who would grasp it, grasps but a reedy
light,
Whilst over his sinking shadow it dances bright!

SUNDOWN

THE noises of day come out distinct and clear,

While children's voices break the muffled
roar

That rises from the village. Evermore
The babble of birds disturbs the dreaming ear.

The ring-dove gurgles from a coppice near,
The lark just flits above his wheaten floor,
And tired of climbing seeks his nestlings four,
Whilst swallows cleave the laden atmosphere.

The bloom of fruit is on the distant firs,

The valley fills with soft and filmy spray,
The breeze just fans the face and dies away,
And not a leaf within the forest stirs.

The sun goes down upon the throbbing
air,

And leaves the hills more silent than they
were.

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